

ADVICE TO THE ISLAMIC NATION REGARDING ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

Throughout this discussion, the words parliamentary participation, electoral participation and voting may be interchanged. However it must be clarified that we are specifically referring to an instance where Allāh's rights are violated, such as what takes place in a system aiming to implement man made laws. Based upon this, we mustn't take our arguments and apply them to a situation that does not exist. I reiterate, the discussion is based upon entering into democratic elections where the right of legislation will be entrusted to man, be it a single individual or a party or the entire population.

It is far beside the point if we enter into our discussion, cases where the outcome is not a violation of Allāh's uluhiyyah, such as Islamic shūrah, which is not entrusting governance into the hands of man. Despite this clear misinterpretation of the reality you will still find many fatawā comparing democracy to shurāh.

PARTICIPATING IN DEMOCRACY BEING SHIRK, RARE OPINION?

Some may bravely regard that participating in the democratic process being shirk to be a shāth opinion.

Firstly a shāth opinion is an irregular opinion expressed solely by the one who issues it. Likewise it goes against the consensus and is based upon no evidence. This is the general understanding of a shath opinion and every madhab (school of thought) have their own definition and in Islamic

jurisprudence shāth opinions are disregarded. An example of this would be a person who argues that the Jumu'ah prayer precedes the khutbah, despite all of the evidence showing the contrary and the ijma' of the scholars approving otherwise.

Upon seeing this assertion on an internet forum, it became upsetting to see the extent that people will go to hide the truth or how ignorant people can be playing on the minds of those who are less aware.

Although this is not a common argument, its worth clarifying with more depth so that this misconception does not escalate and become adopted by the majority of the youth.

This issue of voting is a contemporary one, however its roots date back to pre Islām, and its reality is as clear as the reality of any other man made legislating system. It can be seen from the efforts of those who endorse voting that they themselves are aware that voting is shirk and not a shāth opinion, hence their desperate attempt to play with the minds of the Muslims and convince them otherwise. Had they truly believed it to be shāth then they would not exhaust so much of their time on this topic as most scholars tend not to, regarding issues unanimously seen as shāth.

The understanding of an opinion being shāth is more or less straight forward, obviously there are areas that scholars may have discussed in length in the past, yet this is not the subject at discussion.

It's quite strange that one would claim that the idea of voting to be shirk is a shāth opinion, when Democracy is considered a way of life, and a religion by those who invented it. Ruling man by man made laws is what they pride themselves upon, in fact **even** those who say it's not kufr or shirk themselves confess that it's another way of life.

You often hear them say that *'we must participate or we're allowed to participate to ward off the greater evil and therefore due to the circumstance it's permitted'*. So there seems to be no disagreement that in essence democracy is kufr and shirk, thus the need to justify participating in it.

So in effect what those who regard voting to be shirk are saying is that in essence supporting, empowering and assigning an individual to govern with man made laws to obtain such an authority in the land is shirk, which no one denies, in fact this seems to be the common understanding amongst all people. The reality of the kufr involved in democracy is an undeniable one. It's this principle that the scholars who say it's kufr and shirk adhere to disregarding any feeble arguments presented by the others such as 'lesser of the two evils', Maslaha etc. You will even find them confirming the kufr of any man made laws in their own fatāwa.

As stated in Haytham Al-Haddad's fatwa, he clearly recognises that man made law is kufr,

*"The ruler himself who puts the law of the Creator (Shari'ah) in question or debate between people; there is no doubt that this ruler committed an act of kufr for he is obliged to rule by the law of the Creator . Allah says, **"Legislation is for none but Allah. He has commanded that you worship none but Him."** [Qur'an, 12:41]. To him this ayah is addressed, **"And whosoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, such are the Kafirun (disbelievers)."** [Qur'an, 5:44].¹*

Even the confused author of 'To vote or not to vote' states:

¹ All About Voting

"Therefore, by entering a system of rule which is based upon other than the Sharî'ah and more importantly, often contradicts and sometimes even opposes the Sharî'ah, then it is a consensus of the Muslim scholars that ruling by it is impermissible."

Far greater than it being impermissible, the scholars are unanimously in agreement that it is kufr and shirk as indicated in the verse: *"Verily judgement belongs to Allah."*

مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءُ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ
وَأَبَاؤُكُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِنْ الْحُكْمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ أَمَرَ أَلَّا
تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

I think it's quite pertinent to mention here, highlighting how confused these people are, the clear contradiction made in his 'here's one I made earlier' 'fatwa' when further down after stating:

*"Therefore, by entering a system of rule which is based upon other than the Sharî'ah and more importantly, often contradicts and sometimes even opposes the Sharî'ah, then it is a consensus of the Muslim scholars that ruling by it is impermissible."*²

He then goes on to say:

He (Yusuf) accepted a ministerial position in a government that was ruling by laws other than the Law of Allâh in order to achieve the greater good. It is accepted by these

² To vote or not to vote

*scholars that there is nothing in fact within our Shari'ah that contradicts or abrogates such an action."*³

So it seems clear that there is a common pattern amongst these defeatists, that they recognise man made law to be kufr and shirk...

"...Likewise, to elect in, vote for, and thereby ultimately support a political party which has within its manifesto, rules and laws contradictory to that of the Shari'ah, then this also takes the same ruling of impermissibility for the Muslims..." As admitted in 'To vote or not to vote'⁴

Based upon the consensus of the Muslims, setting up a rival unto Allāh is shirk, which is the reality of voting in the electoral process. With this in mind, how can it be a shāth opinion, when what all that these scholars are saying is the issue of 'Maslaha' and 'lesser of the two harms' are not valid exceptions to this principle laid down by consensus of scholars.

It's like a person trying to engage in a haram action, where this action is deemed unlawful by the consensus of Muslims and a scholar arrives at the verdict that what the individuals claim to be 'maslaha' or 'lesser of the two harms' are invalid.

Is what these scholars who say, 'participating in elections to be kufr' based upon the evident reality surrounding voting to be kufr and shirk, that inconceivable?

In fact the lay people themselves recognise that maslaha, lesser of the two evils and certainly not ikrah, coercion are not acceptable arguments.

³ To vote or not to vote

⁴ Same as above

Again it's like those who approach a scholar arguing that they desire to take out a mortgage or open an off license based upon the principles of maslaha, lesser of the two evils or coercion, when at the same time there are people clearly in the same situation making do and arguing that the principle of maslaha, lesser of the two harms, or coercion cannot be used.

In reality the magnitude of shirk is far greater then taking out a mortgage or selling anything illegal in Islam. As Allah the Most High states:

*"And we did not send before you a messenger, except we revealed unto him that there is no God except me so worship me."*⁵

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا
فَاعْبُدُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾

The calling to the worship of Allah alone is what he sent every messenger for, and likewise He the Most High states *"And verily we have sent to every nation a messenger, calling people to the worship of Allah and to abstain from taghut (false deities)."*⁶

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا
الطَّاغُوتَ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ
الضَّلَالَةُ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ
الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

⁵ Anbiyaa 25

⁶ Nahl: 36

The kufr and shirk of Democracy is undeniable by anyone who obtains an atom's weight of faith, as Mahmoud Shakir states:

*"Then this (i.e. the seeking of a law other than the law of Islam) is kufr and no one from the people of the Qibla doubts in the takfir of the one who utters this (the preference of any other law) or the one who calls to it."*⁷

Therefore the scholars who declare it to be kufr and shirk, regardless of how small they are in number, can their opinion be totally dismissed and considered shāth as if though it's based upon no evidence. That which is presented by the scholars who have adopted the correct opinion is a clear representation of the reality that is; historical, self-professed by those who invented it, implement it, wage war in its defence and export it to Muslim lands.

Even if the scholars, who declare participating in another religion such as voting to be unlawful, are small in number, then what implications does this have upon the truth? Those who argue for it fail to bring relevant evidence but rather rely upon misconceptions that have been taken far out of context, and use this against a clear open reality. So therefore the people who deem it permissible are in need to bring reliable, relevant evidence which permits them to go engage in clear manifested open kufr and shirk that the scholars do not differ in its regard.

An argument presented by Haytham Haddād highlights how feeble and baseless their evidences are *"It is when the inhabitants of a country, who have the shari'ah as the dominant system, want to choose a leader for their country; Say they have four candidates to choose from. They employ elections as a mechanism to select the leader, can we say this is democracy and that it's an act of kufr?"*

Unfortunately it must be said; the argument is irrelevant and besides the point, and not a true representation of the reality we are facing. Most people

⁷ Umdat at tafsir 157/4

would probably not even take notice of the evidences presented, but rather trust his position as a learned man.

There are various scholars who deem voting impermissible which amount to more than 'just a handful'. We must also be sincere with the Most High and seek the evidence and principle presented as opposed to the quantity of scholars. In fact the argument that is presented by those who deem it permissible is very fragile and can be dismissed with the one who possess even the slightest amount of knowledge.

Engaging in this action also gives credit to a system and a way of life that would not exist unless the people casted their votes thus providing the fuel for such a tyrannical system to live.

I don't feel that mentioning scholars is the pivotal argument that needs to be presented in order to provide the one with a sound mind that voting in the elections is haram and kufr. However due to the lack of understanding of many, it seems to be the only way to convince those who have not grasped the firm understanding of tawheed and the pure meaning of the verses of the Quran. So unfortunately it must be included despite the clarity of the verses in the final revelation and the unhidden reality of Democracy.

Although they may vary in background, general understanding and opinions, the scholars mentioned are to illustrate the range of scholars who agree to voting being haram as it violates Allāhs rights. It therefore should be declared, that these scholars are all of different levels in knowledge, some may have specialised in different fields and some may also be learned men of this dīn who are the leaders of communities and islāmic groups. It may be the case that I differ in their understanding and opinions, nevertheless they have united and agreed on this issue as it is from the Usūl (fundamental principles) of the dīn.

From this list is:

Sheikh Muqbil Hādī Al wādī'ī who Scholars such as Nāsir Ad Dīn Albānī mentions in his regard:

“He’s a sheikh who calls to the book (al Qurān) and the Sunnah and to what the Salaf As Sālih were upon.”

Like wise Bin Bāz also states about him:

“This man Sheikh Muqbil is more knowledgeable than me muhadithan...”

Also Sheikh ‘Uthaymīn quotes:

“Sheikh Muqbil; Imām, Imām, Imām” (signifying his great status)

Additionally Ahmed An Najmy says:

“Verily the honourable Sheikh Muqbil Bin Hādī is an ‘ālim of the salafi understanding, and adopts the manhaj of the Salaf as Sālih in his books and taught his students this manhaj.” (Refer to Appendix for Arabic text and sources)

Sheikh Muqbil states, under the title ‘Democracy is Kufr’, regarding the meaning of Democracy: *“The nation rules itself by itself; which means kufr and whoever calls to democracy and he knows it’s meaning then he is a kāfir (disbeliever) as he is calling to make the nation a partner (sharīk) with Allāh ‘Azza wa Jal...”*⁸

He includes the statement of the Most High :

⁸ Qam’ Al Ma’ānid Wa Zajr Al Hāqid Al Hāsīd

"Say (O Muhammad SAW): "I am only a man like you. It has been inspired to me that your Ilâh (God) is One Ilâh (God i.e. Allâh). So whoever hopes for the Meeting^l with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord"⁹

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهٌُ وَاحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا ﴿١١٠﴾

He continues to say;

"We reject (kafarnā) Democracy that makes us a partner with Allāh"

And;

"They will not be pleased with us until we become Jews or Christians "And whoever does not rule by Allāh's law are disbelievers"¹⁰

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّكَاسَ وَأَخْشَوْنَ اللَّهَ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِإِيمَانِكُمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

"And do they seek the judgement of Jahiliyyah"¹¹

⁹ Kahf 110

¹⁰ Māida 44

¹¹ Māida 50

أَفْحَكُمُ الْجَاهِلِيَّةُ يَبْغُونَ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

Furthermore, he states:

“Do you know the meaning of democracy? It means voicing your opinion over all affairs and they have opted in some disbelieving countries for homosexuality and the majority opt for it (its legalisation) and then the government establish it.”

*“If the option of legalising or not legalising is given to the people concerning the legalising of...” and then mentions some prohibited actions in Islam and then says “Do you think they will be legal or illegal? All of this is regarded as the voice of the people under the name of democracy, which the broadcasting cooperation have given life to and pride themselves upon it and we must confirm and be steadfast upon our religion until Allah takes our souls. This issue is a very dangerous issue which is an obvious apostasy and clear open kufr (bawāh), “**And do they have partners who have legislated for them that which Allāh has not permitted¹²**” (quote summarised).*

“And we have to leave off the following of desires and make them agree with the religion of Allāh”.

*“I say in regards to the constitution; don’t say ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ (meaning participate) but rather reject and say to them, “**Verily I’m Muslim. And remember what I say to you and I place my affairs with Allāh**”.¹³*

*“So therefore **withdraw** (from democracy) and say to them between me and you is the book of Allāh and the Sunnah of the messenger”.*

¹² Shu’arrā 21

¹³ Ghāfir 44

"We must be truthful to Allāh and hold in unison to the book of Allāh and be one hand in the face of falsehood "The Muslim is the brother of another Muslim..."

"In Democracy is the corruption of the nation and the corrupting of the Dunyā and Dīn... And it's for the rectification of Kufr."

"We must fear Allāh and say 'We are free from Democracy and free from Kufr'."

"As you are signing (agreeing) to Kufr and are fuelling the country to its desires and are going to assist upon falsehood, Allah the almighty states "Help you one another in Al Birr and At Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allāh. Verily, Allāh is Severe in punishment."14

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تُحِلُّوا شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا
الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ وَلَا ءَامِينَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامَ يَنْتَعُونَ فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ
وَرِضْوَانًا وَإِذَا حُلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ أَن
صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ أَن تَعْتَدُوا وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ
وَالنَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ
الْعِقَابِ ﴿٢﴾

"It's perceived that we would sign and we say 'No' 'No' 'No', as this is the meaning of bartering with Islam" (he means that by participating in democracy and elections you are treating Islam like a transaction where your negotiating the terms and price).

¹⁴ Al Māida 2

"They are calling to the servitude and to their filthy (Khabīth) laws..."

"And those are the people who many think that they are calling (democrats/politicians) to justice, to freedom, equality, rather their calling to something which is strange (to us)."

"And this is their state (from the context, it seems as if he is referring to the politicians and those in support of democracy), and many people are unaware of it, is it that they think they are being called to justice or freedom, for their freedom is a debasement and degradation and their freedom isn't freedom, rather its oppression injustice and treachery."

Also Sheikh Yahya Al hajūrī states:

"If someone asks you: 'What is the reality of elections?' Say: It is from the democratic systems that seek to wipe away Allaah's true Laws. It is also an imitation of the disbelievers, and it is not permissible to imitate them. There are many dangers that can be found in elections and not one single benefit or advantage for the Muslims. From the most significant of its dangers is that it makes an equal balance between the truth and falsehood as well as the truthful one and the false one, all in accordance to what the majority holds. It also neglects loyalty and disloyalty..."¹⁵

He also highlights:

"And elections are as impermissible as other major sins that are obligatory (for us) to forbid and it is not permissible for us to be silent about them to the best of our ability."

Additionally he comments:

¹⁵ Al Mabādī Al Mufīdah fi Tawhīd wal Fiqh wal 'Aqīdah - Basic Principles regarding Tawheed, Islamic Jurisprudence, and Belief- new Arabic print pg. 29 #48.

*"And the means used for elections are prohibited (as well). Whether (a person) gives them [the people who promote elections] a ride in his car or helps them get a voter's card and registration or other than that - whatever leads to prohibited actions is prohibited (as well)... No one who is upright has common sense and loves goodness for himself and the muslims would be pleased with it [elections]."*¹⁶

When asked about the ones who promote elections he answers:

*"It is from the disbeliever's system of democracy."*¹⁷

"And it (elections) are not permissible neither for a man nor a woman nor; neither for a Jinn nor a human."

"...And it has perils and evils that none know except Allah. And Ahlus Sunnah have exhausted themselves in warning against this trial acting upon the statement of Allah: "So that those who were to be destroyed (for their rejecting the Faith) might be destroyed after a clear evidence, and those who were to live (i.e. believers) might live after a clear evidence. And surely, Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower." (Al-Anfal 8:42)

...and His statement: "And ask them about the town that was by the sea, when they transgressed in the matter of the Sabbath (i.e. Saturday): when their fish came to them openly on the Sabbath day, and did not come to them on the day they had no Sabbath. Thus We made a trial of them for they used to rebel. And when a community among them said: "Why do you preach to a people whom Allah is about to destroy or to punish with a severe torment?" (The preachers) said: "In order to be free from guilt before your Lord (Allah), and perhaps they may fear Allah." So when they forgot the reminder that had been given to them, We rescued those who forbade evil." (Al-A'raf 7:163-165)

¹⁶ From the tape: Questions from Inner Hadramout - the city of Tareem

¹⁷ From the tape: Questions from the people of Radfan dated 9 Rajab, 1422H

*Elections are prohibited. It is blind following of the disbelievers and from the branches of democracy. And democracy is prohibited. It is the ruling of the people by themselves without a Book or a Sunnah. And democracy is disbelief. And partisanship (hizbiyyah) is prohibited except for the party of Allah, glorified and exalted is He."*¹⁸

Shaykh Abū Nāsr Muhammad ibn 'Abdullaah ar-Raymee al-Imām explains:

Elections enter into association of partners with Allaah and that is Shirk of obedience, since elections are from the democratic system. And this system was established by the enemies of Islām for the purpose of turning the Muslims away from their Religion. So whoever accepts it, being pleased with it, propagating it, believing it to be correct, surely he has obeyed the opponents of Islām in opposition to the command of Allaah, the Mighty and Majestic. And this is the very essence of associating partners with Allaah with regard to obedience. Allaah has said:

*"Or have they partners with Allaah (false gods), who have instituted for them a religion which Allaah has not allowed. And had it not been for a decisive Word (gone forth already), the matter would have been judged between them. And verily, for the Dhalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers), there is a painful torment. You will see (on the Day of Resurrection), the Dhalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers, etc.) fearful of that which they have earned, and it (Allaah's Torment) will surely befall them...)"*¹⁹

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ شَرَعُوا لَهُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا لَمْ يَأْذَنْ بِهِ اللَّهُ
وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةُ الْفَصْلِ لَفُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ
عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾

¹⁸From the tape: Questions from Ibb, As-Sayyani district, Wadi Khair village and those around it - recorded on 8th Dhul Hijjah, 1423H

¹⁹ From Shaykh Muhammad al-Imaam's book Tanweerudh-Dhulamaat bi Kashf Mafaasid wa Shubahaat Al-Intikhabaat (Illuminating the Darkness in order to uncover the corruptions and doubts concerning Voting), pages 39-40

تَرَى الظَّالِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا وَهُوَ وَاقِعٌ
بِهِمْ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فِي رَوْضَاتِ
الْجَنَّاتِ لَهُمْ مَا يَشَاءُونَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ
الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٢٢﴾

Sayid Qutb (RH) states in Dhilāl:

Verily the Hukm is for Allāh (alone) and it is restricted to him, by the laws of his uluhiyah (worship), so therefore the governance is from the particulars of uluhiyah (worship).²⁰

قال سيد – رحمه الله - في الظلال 1990/4: إنَّ الحكم لا يكون إلا لله، فهو مقصور عليه سبحانه بحكم ألوهيته، إذ الحاكمية من خصائص الألوهية، من ادعى الحق فيها فقد نازع الله سبحانه أولى خصائص ألوهيته؛

The concept of Hukm in Islām is on par with the concept of ritualistic worship, with this in mind, calling for the participation in the ritual of voting is tantamount to shirk and disbelief as this is a violation of Allāh's uluhiyah.

Sheikh Imām Anwar al 'Awlaqi comments about those who state 'The majority of scholars say it's permissible'

"Giving a fatwa calling on people to vote in democratic elections is not an easy thing. One would expect solid evidence from Quran and Sunnah when inviting people to take such a step. However what I have seen is the opposite. I would ask you to read such fatawa and judge them not based on the names or numbers of scholars who are behind them but on the evidence. There was a moment in time when the majority of

²⁰ Fī thilāl al qurān 1990/4

the scholars of the Muslim world were towing the official line of the Mu'tazila and that didn't make it right."

Furthermore he indicates:

*"In addition to that I found out that many people are asking the ones who are telling the people not to vote to bring their evidence! The burden of proof is on the ones who call others to participate in a disbelieving system, in a disbelieving country not the other way around. Anyway the evidence for not voting are all the verses of Quran that refer to governance as a right of Allah in surat al Nisa and al Bakarah, the verses talking about disavowal of the disbelievers in surat al Bakarah, al Nisa and al Mumtahina, and the hadiths of Rasulullah that instruct us to be separate from the disbelievers."*²¹

This is a major cause of concern, when reading these fatāwa and justifications, it becomes apparent that one of their major arguments is that 'sheikh so and so says', and if you then go on to read their fatāwā you'll be disappointed in how brief they are.

From those who also warn against participation in the electoral process is Sheikh Abu Mohammed 'Ásim Al Maqdisī, who describes democracy in his book, 'Democracy is a religion' as:

"And this is its greatest (i.e. that the authority belongs to the people) characteristic according to its people and in its cause they devoutly praise it. 'Oh brother of tawhīd' from its distinguished characteristics is al Kufr (disbelief) and Shirk (associating partners with Allāh) and falsehood that nullifies the religion of Islām, in its severest forms of nullifying, and the millah of tawhīd in its most severest forms of opposition."

²¹ <http://www.kalamullah.com/current-affairs16.html>

وهذا هو أعظم خصائص الديمقراطية عند أهلها... ومن أجله يلهجون بمدحها، وهو يا أخا التوحيد في الوقت نفسه من أخص خصائص الكفر والشرك والباطل الذي يناقض دين الإسلام وملة التوحيد أشد المناقضة ويُعارضه أشد المعارضة

It is strongly advised to read his in depth works regarding this issue, such as the above mentioned book. Upon doing so it will be apparent how in depth they deal with the discussion as opposed to those who issue their fatawa with such shallow logical based arguments.

He further explains:

"Democracy is the rule of the people or the rule of the taghūt, however in all cases it's not the rule of Allāh the greatest the highest."

والديمقراطية: هي حكم الشعب أو حكم الطاغوت... لكنّها على جميع الأحوال ليست حكم الله الكبير المتعال

Also:

"Therefore this is the freedom of democracy which is the freedom from the religion of Allāh and his legislation and is a transgression of his limits."

إذاً هذه هي حرية الديمقراطية: التحرّر من دين الله وشرائعه وتعدي حدوده

As for the ministers he comments about their status by saying:

"These ministers, in reality, are awthān (objects of worship²²), idols that are worshipped and alleged gods who call to be worshipped in their temples (in their houses of gatherings)..."

فهؤلاء النواب هم في الحقيقة أوثان منصوبة وأصنام معبودة وألهة مزعومة منصوبة في معابدهم

He continues:

As for the people, Allāh categorises them into two, in doing so he refers to - the verse:

"He is the one who revealed upon you (Mohammed) his book."²³

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ
وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَبَهَ مِنْهُ
ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ
فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذْكُرُ إِلَّا أَهْلُ
الْبَيْتِ ﴿٧﴾

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ
الْوَهَّابُ ﴿٨﴾

²² Wathan, which varies to an Idol as they usually take the form an inanimate object as opposed to an idol

²³ Āli 'imrān 7-8

“The first category is the people of knowledge, who are deeply rooted (in faith and principles). For they take it all (knowledge and principles) and believe in it all, they bind the general with the specific, the absolute with the restricted and the summarised with its detail, and all that which is obscure to them then they return it to the mother of principles that are clarified and concise and to the firmly planted and established principles that is tightly interwoven with the legal (islāmic) evidences.

The second category, the people of deviation and misguidance, who are those who follow vagueness, the take it and rejoice in it solely (disregarding the largely remaining evidences and misrepresenting its reality) and from it they seek tribulation, rejecting its conciseness or clarity or its explanation.”

1- أهل علم ورسوخ: يأخذونه ويؤمنون به جميعاً، فيربطون العام بمخصصه، والمطلق بمقيده، والمجمل بمبينه، وكل ما أشكل عليهم ردوه إلى أمه من الأصول المحكمات البيّنات والقواعد الراسيات الراسخات التي تضافرت عليها دلائل الشرع.

2- أهل زيغ وضلال: يتبعون المتشابه منه، يأخذونه ويفرحون به وحده ابتغاء الفتنة.. معرضين عن محكمه أو مبينه أو مفسره...

Therefore all fellow Muslims should be aware, that Democracy is in essence a clear issue to the one with insight. Anyone who dampens the reality of participating in democracy and elections and redefines it as ‘selecting’ or ‘choosing’ is conforming to the description of the second category, as explained by Sheikh Abū Mohammed. Unlike the first category these people fail to truly present the reality as it is, and do not go back to the firmly established principles of this religion when matters seem vague to them.

These include matters of creed such as; Tawhīd, Loyalty to Allāh and his messenger, Loyalty to Allāh’s legislation, pride of Islām, disavowal from the

taghūt and reliance upon God and its likes, which are all primary principles that have been shunned despite their pertinence given in the final revelation.

Their deviation is based upon feeble grounds stemming from arguments built upon conjecture and speculation, so much so that these arguments lead to false claims about one of the noblest personalities history has mentioned, Yusuf (A.S). These claims are so devious that may lead to apostasy if heed is not taken which will later be discussed

To add to the list of the scholars who deem voting to be kufr is Sheikh ‘Abdul Qādir bin ‘Abdul ‘Azīz where he mentions:

“As for those amongst the people who vote for them (i.e. Members of Parliament), they are committing Kufr as well, because according to the representative democracy, the voters are in reality delegating them to practice the mastership of Shirk – legislating beside Allah – on their behalf.”

As explained by an anonymous Tunisian Sheikh in his works titled Tahdhīr min atanaajasa bi mashārahakah fy intikhābāt Tūnisī, where he explains:

“Verily the participation in legislative and general elections, in reality, are based upon the choosing of a ruler and a legislator of laws that are not the laws of Allāh... This (elections) is based upon the selecting a man who gives no value to the law of Allāh.”

He then explicitly states:

“I therefore declare: Participation in the elections as disbelief and the exiting from the millah of Islām.”

Additionally the fatwā of Sheikh Ibrahīm Bin ‘Abdul ‘Azīz Barakāt who explains in his fatwā ‘Hukm al mashārikat fy intikhābāt at Tashrī’:

“And what is called ‘legislative elections’ is kufr as that is seeking judgment in other than Allāh’s law, as that means that the absolute sovereignty to the people and

therefore the people they are the ones who choose the laws that are implemented. Therefore if they (the people) want Islām then they choose it and if they desire other than that then they choose it. If the Nation differs in an issue they then return it (the affair) to the majority and that, with no doubt, is Kufr Bawāh (manifest disbelief)..."

وما يسمى بالانتخابات التشريعية، من الكفر لأن ذلك تحاكم إلى غير شرع الله، فهي تعني أن السيادة المطلقة للشعب، فالشعب هو الذي يختار الأحكام التي تطبق عليه، فإن أراد الإسلام يحكم به، وإن أراد غيره فله الخيار، وإن اختلف الشعب في الأمر يرجع الحكم إلى رأي الأغلبية، أي أغلبية الشعب، وهذا لا شك من الكفر البواح

Furthermore, another who recognises voting to be kufr is Sheikh Abū Mus'ab 'Abdul Wadūd in his book Qātia' mahzilat al intikhābāt:

"...If you participate in these elections...then you are supporting them upon their oppression and disbelief..."

Sheikh Abu 'Umar As Sayf (As Shahīd) explains:

"Regarding general elections, which is the selection of a leader or members of legislative councils..., for it is not permitted as it is from the paths and ways of the Democratic disbelieving system..."²⁴

Sheikh Abū Mohammed states in his fatwā regarding voting to repel a greater evil:

"...Whether it's to give room for the dīn or the Dunyā or to remove the oppression and the reality of that is not the selecting of a legislator or ruler that governs by other than what Allāh has revealed...Then there is no problem..."

He further clarifies that if there is any type of legislation taking place then this is not permitted:

²⁴ Risālah ilā mujāhidi Al-'Irāq

- دنيوية أم دينية التوسعة تلك كان سواء - عليهم ويوسع عنهم المظالم يرفع الذي أو
في يكون أو ، الله أنزل ما بغير يحكمون حكام أو مشرعين اختيار ذلك حقيقة يكن ولم
بأس ذلك في يكون لا أن فأرجو المكفرات؛ من شيئاً التصويت أو الاختيار ذلك

"...and (in the case when) the reality of the voting is for the purpose of a legislating body or a ruler who governs by other than Allāh's law, then it is not permissible..."²⁵

Sheikh Mohammed Al Fazāzi, after highlighting the reality of democracy, states:

"It is (electoral participation) unlawful from islāmic jurisprudence (muḥaraman shar'an), and it leads to apostasy and exiting Islām..."²⁶

Abu Qatāda Al Falastīnī clearly expresses his condemnation of electoral participation throughout his interview regarding this issue. Like most sources mentioned, please refer to them for a wider insight.

"After understanding this (he refers to the reality of democracy that he formerly explains) then this as we see, this contends with the right of Allāh from his uluhiyyah...so if we describe someone as having the right to issue orders independently and that he's the sayyid, (master) meaning obeyed...then we have understood the parliament as sayyid, the master, meaning god. And elections based upon its meaning, is the voting of a sayyid, meaning ilāh (god). It's the picture how the children of democracy (those who ascribe to it) understand it and how its (democracy) companions understand it..."

Sheikh Ahmed Bin Mahmūd al Khālīdī comments:

"And this is the reality of what they practise in elections, for they subscribe/practise another religion by it (the elections), the religion of democracy, which ascribes governance to the people and not Allah. These people are choosing a god that they will

²⁵ Hukm fy mashārahak fy intikhābāt majālis nayābiyyah takhlū min al mukafarāt

²⁶ Natharāt fī Siyāsiyyah as shari'yyah

empower or entrust the authority of absolute legislation in agreement to the constitution."

Sheikh Feiz Mohammed also illustrates the impermissibility of elections in his talk, which is available online.

Also from those who deem it impermissible are: Dr Israr Ahmed of tanzeem e Islami, Sheikh Abu Hamza Al Misri and also this seems to be the most commonly accepted stance from Hizb At Tahrir.

Bearing in mind, all that which has been presented, can the misconception of it being a shāth opinion really be accepted? Can one really argue it's an outrageous opinion that voting is kufr and shirk despite its manifest reality? Is it not for those who deem it permissible to present the sharī dalīl rather than logic and analogy that is far from the reality being discussed?

REJECTION OF FALSE DEITIES AND A BRIEF CLARIFICATION OF RULING BY OTHER THEN ALLĀHS LAW

One of the most crucial issues when it comes to voting is the sidelining of the most important principle in Islām, abstaining and rejecting false deities. As mentioned earlier Sheikh Abū Mohammed illustrates that those who encourage Muslims to participate in democracy are from those of (zaygh wa dalāl), vagueness and misguidance and they fail to return that which is unclear to them to the core principle of the religion.

The most core principle annihilated when participating in elections is Tawhīd and rejection of taghūt (false deities). Therefore it is paramount that this concept is discussed here, however this topic can never be completed in just one article, and it requires volumes upon volumes for justice to be given to such a topic. As Allāh says in the Qurān:

Say, "If the sea were ink for [writing] the words of my Lord, the sea would be exhausted before the words of my Lord were exhausted, even if We brought the like of it as a supplement."

قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مَدَادًا لَكُمَّتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْفَدَ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَدًا ﴿١٠٩﴾

Glory be to God, who sent every messenger to proclaim that there is no God but him and to abstain from the false deities.

"And We certainly sent into every nation a messenger, [saying], "Worship Allah and avoid Taghut."

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا
الطَّاغُوتَ فَمِنْهُمْ مَن هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَن حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ
الضَّلَالَةُ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ
الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

And glory be to Him, the one who sent down his final revelation, wherein each verse came down to confirm and establish his tawhīd. With such an important concept, anyone who strays from the oneness of God and enters into areas that violate Allāh's rights, has surely wronged himself and Allāh will cause all his action to be void. As Allāh states:

"And indeed it has been revealed to you (O Muhammad SAW), as it was to those (Allāh's Messengers) before you: If you join others in worship with

Allâh, (then) surely (all) your deeds will be in vain, and you will certainly be among the losers."

وَلَقَدْ أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ
وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾

The extent of this sin is so great that even the final messenger and those before him were warned in such a stern manner and tone. So therefore, how about those who are not messengers? And those who have not had their former sins and those to come forgiven? How about those who have not been promised paradise? How is we are so confident to prop up a false deity and give him the support he needs to commit the greatest sin one can commit?

As reported in an authentic hadīth on the authority of Abū ‘Abdillāhi Nu‘mān bin Bahīr who said: I heard the Messenger of Allaah (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) say: “That which is lawful is clear and that which is unlawful is clear, and between the two of them are doubtful matters about which many people do not know. Thus he who avoids doubtful matters clears himself in regards to his religion and his honour, but he who falls into doubtful matters [eventually] falls into that which is unlawful, like the shepherd who pastures around a sanctuary, all but grazing therein. Truly every king has a sanctuary, and truly Allah’s sanctuary is His prohibitions. Truly in the body there is a morsel of flesh, which, if it be whole, all the body is whole, and which, if it is diseased, all of [the body] is diseased. Truly, it is the heart.” [Related by al-Bukhaari and Muslim.]

عن أبي عبد الله النعمان بن بشير رضي الله عنهما ، قال : سمعت رسول الله
صلي الله عليه وسلم يقول: (إن الحلال بين ، وإن الحرام بين ، وبينهما أمور
مشتبهات لا يعلمهن كثير من الناس ، فمن اتقى الشبهات فقد استبرأ لدينه وعرضه

، ومن وقع في الشبهات وقع في الحرام ، كالراعي يرعى حول الحمى يوشك أن يرتع فيه، ألا وإن لكل ملك حمى ، ألا وإن حمى الله محارمه ، ألا وإن في الجسد مضغة إذا صلحت صلح الجسد كله ، وإذا فسدت فسد الجسد كله ، ألا وهي القلب) رواه البخاري [رقم : 52] ومسلم [رقم :

The issue for the true monotheist is clear like the clarity of the day, as for those who delve into such grey and cloudy areas and whose hearts are short sighted, and who cannot see the magnitude of the sin involved in it despite the conciseness of the Qurān then we say to you, as said by the noble messenger (s.a.w.) *“And whoever fears the grey areas then he is cleared himself in his religion and honor”... Truly every king has a sanctuary, and truly Allah’s sanctuary is His prohibitions.”*

As for the true believer then we say to you: Remain patient and steadfast, place your affairs in the hands of Allāh and he will take you forth from you discomfort, and as Allāh states *“And whoever fears Allāh then he will provide for him a way out...”*

فَإِذَا بَلَغَ أَجْلُهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ فَارِقُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ
وَأَشْهِدُوا ذَوَى عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ لِلَّهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ
يُوعِظُ بِهِ مَن كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ
لَّهُ مَخْرَجًا ۝

And likewise to the true monotheist (muwahid) we say: *“verily the lawful is clear and the unlawful is clear.”*

Ibn Al Qayum states in his book ‘lān al muwaqa’in :

"Tāghūt is all that a servant exceeds the boundary with, from that which is worshipped, followed or obeyed, so therefore the tāghūt is all the people that judgement is sought from, other than Allāh and his messenger, or that which they worship other than Allah..."

والطاغوت كل ما تجاوز به العبد حده من معبود أو متبوع أو مطاع فطاغوت كل قوم من يتحاكمون إليه غير الله ورسوله أو يعبدونه من دون الله أو يتبعونه على غير بصيرة من الله أو يطيعونه فيما لا يعلمون أنه طاعة الله

Therefore the transgression of one who rules by other than Allāhs law is due to the following points:

1. His claim to have the right to legislate
2. The worship of the people towards him by seeking judgement, obedience and the acceptance of his legislations.

Allāh the Most High states:

*"Have you not seen those who claim to have believed in what was revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what was revealed before you? They wish to refer legislation to Taghut, while they were commanded to reject it; and Satan wishes to lead them far astray."*²⁷

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ ءَامَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا ﴿٦٠﴾

Sheikh al Alwasī states in his tafsīr of this verse: *"that it (tāghūt) is everyone that rules by falsehood..."*

²⁷ Nisā: 60

وفي معناه كل من يحكم بالباطل. هو بنحو هذا الكلام قال الألوسي في تفسيره و
كذلك البيضاوي

Ibn Kathīr explains this verse was revealed in relation to “a group from the hypocrites who confessed their Islām, yet desired to seek judgment of jahiliyyah.”

: في جماعة من المنافقين، ممن أظهروا الإسلام، أرادوا أن يتحاكموا إلى حكام
الجاهلية.

Alāmma ‘Abdur Rahmān as Sa’dī in his tafsīr states 184 “Whoever rules by other than Allāh’s legislation is a Tāghūt (false diety).

و قال العلامة عبد الرحمن السعدي في (تفسير السعدي 184):
وهو كل من حكم بغير شرع الله فهو طاغوت

Mohammed Ibn Abdul Wahāb explains:

“The forms of Taghūt are many however their main categories are five,”

والطواغيت كثيرة ورؤسهم خمسة، إبليس لعنه الله، ومن عبد وهو راض، ومن ادعى
شيئاً من علم الغيب، ومن دعا الناس إلى عبادة نفسه، ومن حكم بغير ما أنزل الله...).

From his list he mentions:

“The one who rules by other than Allāh’s law.”

The evidences illustrating that judging by man made laws is kufr and shirk are ample. Only an ignorant person who has disbelieved in Allāh would argue otherwise.

Additionally Sulaymān bin Sihmān states in durar:

"At Tāghūt comes under three variations; Tāhgūt of hukm (legislation, Tāghūt of worship and tāghūt of obedience and following."²⁸

BEHIND NOT REJECTING IN FALSE DEITIES

Allāh has obligated 'kufr bi tāghūt (rejecting the false deities) on every single individual. It is seen as a cornerstone of ones faith to the extent that it's deemed void if he fails to do so. As the verse states *"If you join others in worship with Allāh, (then) surely (all) your deeds will be in vain, and you will certainly be among the losers."*

وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ
وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

Therefore for one to ensure his faith is sound he must take the step of rejecting these false deities. As explained above its evident that these legislators are false deities and should be shunned in protest of our rejection of their ways.

In referring to the verse Nahl: 36, Mohamed Ibn Abdul Wahāb clarifies:

"Be aware, May Allāh have mercy upon your soul, the first thing Allāh has obliged the children of Ādam with is the rejection of the false deities (al kufr bi Tāghūt) and the imān in Allāh, and a person will not be a Muslim except by rejecting the false deities even if he prays and fasts. Furthermore a monotheist is never a monotheist except after having disavowed everything that is worshipped besides Allāh, even if HE worships Allāh."

أقول أن الإنسان إذا لم يكفر بالطاغوت لم يكن مسلماً ولا دخل في الإسلام، إذ شهادة التوحيد التي يرددها المرء مراراً (لا إله إلا الله) تستوجب على المسلم أن يكفر بكل

²⁸ Durar as siniyah 503/10 risālat muhimah fy Tāghūt

معبود من دون الله اعتقاداً و قولاً و عملاً، فلا يعبدّه و لا يحبه و لا يواليه و لا يناصره....فكلمة التوحيد لها قيود و شروط من بينها الكفر بالطاغوت كما ذكر ذلك أهل العلم، فلا يكون المسلم مسلماً إلا بعد الكفر بالطاغوت و إن صلى و صام، و لا يكون الموحد موحداً إلا بالبراءة من كل معبود من دون الله و إن عبد الله

He then includes the verse: *"There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in Tāghūt and believes in Allāh, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allāh is All-Hearer, All-Knower."*

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ
بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمَرْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَى لَا
أَنْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Sheikh Abdur Rahmān Bin Hasan concludes in Durar as Siniyah:

"The verse (baqara) illustrates that there cannot be a servant that holds to Lā ilāha ilAllāh (the shahadah) except if he rejects the false deities..."

Sheikh Shanqītī states:

"And whoever does not hold to the trustworthy handle (the shahāda) then he has withdrawn from imān (the status of a muslim)...It is not possible for Imān in the tāghūt and imān in Allāh to be combined, as Kufr bi Tāghūt is a condition of imān in Allāh...as explicitly in the statement of Allāh (baqarah...)"²⁹

²⁹ Adwā al bayān 256/2

ومن لم يستمسك بالعروة الوثقى فهو بمعزل عن الإيمان؛ لأن الإيمان بالله هو العروة الوثقى، والإيمان بالطاغوت يستحيل اجتماعه مع الإيمان بالله؛ لأن الكفر بالطاغوت شرط في الإيمان بالله أو ركن منه، كما هو صريح قوله: {فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ

Sheikh Abdur Rahmān bin Hasan states:

"The scholars from the salaf and khalf, those from the companions, the tabiīn, the imāms and all of the ahl us sunnah are in agreement that a person is not a Muslim except by being free from greater shirk and having barā from it and whoever commits it..."

Therefore we say, is propping up a false deity expressing your dissociation from shirk? And having barā from it and whoever commits it?

جمع العلماء سلفاً وخلفاً من الصحابة، والتابعين، والأئمة، وجميع أهل السنة، أن المرء لا يكون مسلماً، إلا بالتجرّد من الشرك الأكبر، والبراءة منه وممن فعله، وبغضهم ومعاداتهم بحسب الطاقة والقدرة، وإخلاص الأعمال كلها لله، كما في حديث معاذ الذي في الصحيحين: «فإنَّ حقَّ الله على العباد أن يعبدوه ولا يشركوا به شيئاً

Sheikh Nāsir al Fahad states:

"Verily Allāh, glory be to Him, has placed al kufr bi Tāghūt and imān in Allāh as a condition for one entering Islām..."³⁰

ان الله سبحانه شرط الكفر بالطاغوت مع الإيمان به للدخول في الإسلام

WHAT DOES REJECTING THE FALSE DEITIES MEAN?

As stated in Durar as siniyah, Mohammed ibn 'Abdul Wahāb explains:

³⁰ At tibyān fī kufr man a'ānal amrīkān

"As for the description of rejecting false deities then it is that you believe in the falsehood of the worship to others than Allāh, and that you leave it, hate it, reject its people, oppose them...And that you have animosity for the people of shirk and you oppose them and this is the millah of Ibrāhīm..."

فأما صفة الكفر بالطاغوت : فأن تعتقد بطلان عبادة غير الله ، وتتركها ، وتبغضها ، وتكفر أهلها ، وتعاديتهم . وأما معنى الإيمان بالله ، فأن تعتقد أن الله هو الإله المعبود وحده ، دون من سواه ، وتخلص جميع أنواع العبادة كلها لله ، وتنفيها عن كل معبود سواه ، وتحب أهل الإخلاص ، وتواليهم ، وتبغض أهل الشرك وتعاديتهم ، وهذه ملة إبراهيم التي سفه نفسه من رغب عنها ، وهذه : هي الأسوة التي أخبر الله بها في قوله { قد كانت لكم أسوة حسنة في إبراهيم والذين معه إذ قالوا لقومهم إنا برءاء منكم ومما تعبدون من دون الله كفرنا بكم وبدا بيننا وبينكم العداوة والبغضاء أبداً حتى تؤمنوا بالله وحده } (الممتحنة:4)31.هـ

As stated by Sheikh Sulaymān bin Sihmān, also in durar as siniyah: *"And what is meant by the meaning of abstaining from it (tāghūt) is having animosity to it, and hatred for it in the heart, and cursing it and disgracing it with the tongue and attempting to destroy it by the hand if capable, parting from it and whoever claims to abstain from the false deities and does not do so has not been truthful."*³²

والمراد من اجتنابه هو بغضه ، وعداوته بالقلب ، وسبه وتقبيحه باللسان ، وإزالته باليد عند القدرة ، ومفارقته ، فمن ادعى اجتناب الطاغوت ولم يفعل ذلك فما صدق

In reference to verse 4, chapter 60 Sheikh Hamd bin 'Atiq: *"A person does not become a muslim who openly declares his religion until he opposes every group (misguided) by what they have become renowned for and that he explicitly shows*

³¹ Ad Durar as siniyah 161/1

³² Ad Durar as siniyah 503-502/10

animosity to them. And whoever rejects shirk: then this means to openly declare ones tawhīd or the forbidding of shirk and warn to against it."

ولا يكون المسلم مظهراً لدينه ، حتى يخالف كل طائفة بما اشتهر عندها ، ويصرح لها بعداوتها ، والبراءة منه . فمن كان كفره بالشرك فإظهار الدين عنده : التصريح بالتوحيد ، أو النهي عن الشرك ، والتحذير منه³³

WHY IS PARTICIPATING IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS HARAM AND SHIRK

Some may try to strip the reality of voting by claiming its merely 'selecting' an individual from a list of people and there is no sin on the person as he is not responsible for his role as a lawmaker.

Sheikh Abū Muhammed Al Maqdisī states:

*"As for the one votes: then, as you are aware, the reality of what he will stand for when he practices this pagan religion (democracy) is that he is choosing a legislator (lord) from these various lords. They are entrusted to legislate and represent him in this pagan service."*³⁴

حقيقة وكانت ، صريحة غير صيغة صيغ السؤال كان إن أما
حكام أو تشريعية سلطة لصالح هي إنما عنها المسؤول التصويت
يجوز فلا الله؛ أنزل ما بغير يحكمون

Sheikh Abū Basīr At Tartūsi includes in his fatwā 1005:

The meaning of legislative elections, as they are known, in the current present systems that do not rule by Allāh's law is: selecting legislating gods and lords that

³³ Sabeel an Najaat wa fakaak pg 92

³⁴ Al ishrāqah

legislate for the people and country...Their rubūbiyyah (lordship) and uluhiyyah (godliness) are made known to the voters and that they have the right to legislate and that is not permissible...as it the greater shirk..."

Abu Qatāda explains:

After understanding this (he refers to the reality of democracy that he formerly explains) then this as we see, this contends with the right of Allāh from his uluhiyyah...so if we describe someone as having the right to issue orders independently and that he's the sayyid, master meaning obeyed...then we have understood the parliament as sayyid, the master, meaning god. And elections based upon its meaning, is the voting of a sayyid, meaning ilāh (god)..."

"It's the picture how the children of democracy (those who ascribe to it) understand it and how its (democracy) companions understand it...Therefore what is elections? Elections means that I am pleased with this (individual, referring to MP) to represent me in expressing my desire to brand something lawful or illegal...and as that is manifest that opposes the shahādah (lā ilāha ila Allāh)."

The Scholars unanimously agree that supporting a disbeliever in his religion and allying with them for the sake of their creed is kufr, disbelief. It is no hidden secret that these legislators have adopted the creed of democracy and have deemed it superior to any other way of life including Islām.

The statement of sheikh Muqbil also stresses why democracy is shirk:

"The nation rules itself by itself; which means kufr, and whoever calls to democracy and he knows its meaning then he is a kāfir."

Supporting an MP or any legislator is giving him a free right to oppose Islām and destroy this religion.

“They intend to put out the Light of Allāh (i.e. the religion of Islām, this Qur’ân, and Prophet Muhammad SAW) with their mouths. But Allāh will complete His Light even though the disbelievers hate (it).”

يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٨﴾

It’s not long ago when many foolish, naïve Muslims participated in the war in Iraq, and it was not long after that when he sought to place a ban on the Niqab, the veil.

Whether the ban was introduced or not, it illustrates their animosity for the religion and how they reserve the capability to remove and suppress any part of Islām they wish. And lets face it, we can see where this is going, it won’t be long until this law eventually gets passed, that’s because Allāh states *“most of them are fasiqūn”* and that’s the essence of democracy.

Sheikh Abū Mus’āb ‘Abdul Wadūd states: *“in all of this (voting and aiding them upon their kufr and oppression) is the prolonging of this disbelieving country (here he is referring to Algeria, although the reality is the same).”*

في كلّ هذا إطالة في عمر هذه الدولة الكافرة

THE MISCONCEPTION OF THE COMPANIONS WHO MADE DU’Ā FOR NAJĀSHI

Abu Qatada when asked about this misconception, after highlighting the manifest shirk of voting states:

"...Then why are they disputing (meaning where's the room for debate?) From which gate do they dispute this issue? Are we now discussing the topic of the permissibility of supporting a kāfir (disbeliever)? Are we not now speaking about the issue of fighting a kāfir under the banner of a kāfir? ...The issue in front of us is a person choosing his god, his sayyid his legislator..."

The issue to hand, as you can see, is the permissibility of supporting of a disbeliever over another. In essence a disbeliever is not aided (in war), so if some of the people of knowledge see that helping a disbeliever over another to attain some type of benefit for the Muslims then that's an issue that remains in the realm of fiqh..."

He then goes on to explain that supporting them (disbelievers) over OTHER Muslims, nullifies Imān as it enters primarily into walā of Allāh and his messenger and the believers. He then continues by saying:

"As Haythamī and others from the people of knowledge mention...for example, the permissibility of helping a kāfir over another..., so this is a fiqhy issue" ...so therefore the statement that Duā is from the highest forms of support is false, bātil."

Furthermore he states:

"And the issue as you can see is a subsidiary (far'iyyatun) issue, an 'amali issue in front of an issue of doctrine ('itiqādiyyah)."

This misconception has surfaced due to a lack of precision when relating the reality of electoral participation. Those who bring this as evidence in support of participating in the elections fail to recognise that voting entails more than just support of a disbeliever over another.

Again we have a analogy made, Qiyās which is incorrect, the likening of the companions supporting Najāshi over his rival to the likening of supporting one legislator (tāghūt) over his rival. Far from merely supporting another

enemy of Allāh over another, voting entails that an individual empowers a person allowing him to take authority in legislating, which is a nullifier of faith.

The major error with this argument is that they have used the story of the companions when in Abyssinia, despite the clear concise, explicit verses of the Qurān that instruct the believers to abstain from false deities.

For this overseen reality, the analogy is void and deemed false. The incident of Najāshi and empowering a pseudo god are very different. If only those who made this analogy would recognise this stark difference, they would have realised that the issue of supporting a polytheist or a non-believer against a common enemy has been discussed in the past by the scholars under what many refer to as 'Fighting under the banner of the polytheists'. This issue is a separate one in totality and when the scholars discuss this issue they are referring to a scenario where the Muslims are not committing the greater shirk.

If fighting under the banner of a polytheist does not entail shirk, then as we will see, the scholars differed in its regards, due to it being a derivative (fari') issue as opposed to a core one (asli).

As mentioned in Al Umm 159/4:

"If support is sought from a group of Muslim captives from the polytheists, and the fighting is against another group of polytheists then it is said:

"They are permitted to fight as it is said that Zubayr (ra) and his companions fought in the land of the Abasynians with polytheists against polytheists."

And likewise it's further explained:

“And what is forbidden when fighting them (the polytheists allied with polytheists) is the permitting of shirk.”

There is also some discussion regarding the authenticity of this narration as Shāfi’ states:

“And we are not sure of the news of Zubayr regarding its authenticity...”

This is due to the presence of Muhammed Ibn Ishāq in the chain, it is also stated:

And if it is authentic, then Najāshi was Muslim, a believer in the messenger (s.a.w) ...”

Despite some concern of the scholars regarding its authenticity, for arguments sake, we will agree to it being sound.

Imām Ahmed notes various scenarios and discusses the permissibility of fighting along the polytheists against another polytheist. In one instance he deems it ‘lawful’ and in another he states:

“I do not know”

Bahūti discusses in ‘kashf al Qina’ from the hanbali school:

“It is not allowed to fight with the polytheist against an enemy of theirs except if the Muslims fear their evil.”

Also mentioned by Al Jasās al Hanafī in Mukhtasar al ikhtilāf al fuqahā lil imām At tahāwi:

"It is not permitted to fight with the people of shirk as the ruling of shirk is apparent and this is the opinion of the Māliki."

Thowrī states:

"They can fight with them."

Awzāi' mentions:

"They are permitted to do so if they make it a condition that if they overpower them, then they take them to the land of Islām." (454/3)

Ibn Hubayrah, in al Fisāh explains:

"They differ regarding: Is the help sought from the polytheist or if they are assisted upon their enemy. Māliki and Ahmed state that they are not helped under any circumstance." (286/2)

What is discussed here is not aimed at helping formulate an opinion regarding this topic, rather it is to highlight that fighting under the banner of the polytheist is not an action that removes one from the realms of Islām, so long as the common enemy are not Muslims. This is why the scholars explicitly mention that the enemy fought are not fighting under the banner of Islām and that no shirk takes places.

There is no debate amongst the scholars regarding its permissibility had this issue been one where the Muslims were requested to carry out an action that nullifies the core of their belief.

Therefore if a situation arose where there may be some attainable benefit for participating in battle with polytheists against other polytheists, then the

scholars may discuss whether its abstention is more dangerous than its participation.

However if for example, the polytheists demanded the Muslims to wear their symbols of disbelief, whether it be a cross or some other type of kufr, in order to participate to attain a greater good, then there is no room in this scenario for debate regarding its permissibility. This is so, as this is a nullifier of the core of faith and no benefit can justify such an action.

So therefore brother and sisters in Islām it is clear that the Qiyās made does not stand, and the event of the companions in Abyssinia is far from the reality of participating in another religion, that nullifies ones core belief.

As Abū Qatāda mentions in ‘condemnation of the democratic process’, where he enquires about why there is uncertainty regarding this topic, he highlights that what people are referring to is the assistance of the polytheists over others. This, as we are aware has been clarified by the scholars.

So for those who see that making Dua for a taguūt over another is the same as voting for one legislator over another has been misled to believe this due to a lack of insight into the difference.

YUSUF (AS) WORKING FOR THE KING OF EGYPT

“O two companions of the prison! Are many multiple lords (gods) better or Allâh, the One, the subjugator? You do not worship besides Him but only names which you have named (forged), you and your fathers, for which Allâh has sent down no authority. The command (or the judgement) is for none but Allâh. He has commanded that you worship none but Him (i.e. His Monotheism), that is the (true) straight religion, but most men know not.”
(Surah Yusuf)

From the deceptive measures of those who argue in favour of electoral participation, is the accusation that Yusuf worked as a minister in the government of the disbelieving king of Egypt. They then draw an analogy, between this and working in parliament, which they claim that because Yusuf (AS) acquired this position for the sake of the 'greater good' and 'Da'wa' then likewise voting for an MP who will deliver this, is permitted. In the feeble article 'to vote or not to vote' it states:

"Thirdly, according to many scholars, it is allowed to enter the political system in order to elicit change using a well known principle found in Usūl'l-Fiqh namely "The legislative law of the previous Prophets is legislation for our nation too...The scholars who accepted this principle, clarified it would only be applicable if it had not been abrogated by legislation in our Sharī'ah, based in turn on the Qur'ānic narrative on the Prophet Yūsuf ('alayhis salām), who accepted a ministerial position in a government that was ruling by laws other than the Law of Allāh in order to achieve the greater good."

It is not enough that we read in the Qurān of how Yūsaf (as) was accused of a crime he did not commit, so how do we then add to this accusation another which is far greater than the one mentioned in the Qurān.

The accusation, that he ruled in a system that was a tyrannical tāghūt system like the ones present today to obtain some benefit, is a crime against Yusuf (a.s) and those who use this to justify voting must be extremely cautious.

To base the permissibility of selecting a false deity and empowering it to a god like position based upon this misconception of Yusuf (a.s) shows how desperate for some type of evidence they are. Despite all the concise verses in the Qurān (ayāt Muhkamāt), the clear ahadīth and the core principle of this Dīn that highlight the obligation of not supporting any pseudo God, they rely

on a circumstance where little is known about. Filling in the gaps and making assumptions is what they have done with the story of Yusuf and therefore one of their fundamental arguments is based upon conjecture.

"They follow not except assumption and what [their] souls desire, and there has already come to them from their Lord guidance."

إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءٌ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَءَابَاؤُكُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ
إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى الْأَنْفُسُ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ
الْهُدَى ۚ

If we look into the story of Yusuf (AS) his uncompromising stance towards shirk is evident during his incarceration when he states:

"O two companions of the prison! Are many multiple lords (gods) better or Allâh, the One, the subjugator? You do not worship besides Him but only names which you have named (forged), you and your fathers, for which Allâh has sent down no authority. The command (or the judgement) is for none but Allâh. He has commanded that you worship none but Him (i.e. His Monotheism), that is the (true) straight religion, but most men know not."

The scholars of tafsîr such as al Qurtubi 191/9 state that he refused to interpret their dreams until he familiarized them with Tawhîd. His lineage was one of monotheism, the son of Ya'qûb, the son of Ishâq the son of Ibrâhîm (AS), these were the greatest players in calling people to the oneness of God and they all took the same uncompromising stance against shirk. It was the same stance that the final messenger to mankind took (s.a.w) when he refused to submit to their offers of what they threw at him from the worldly riches.

As stated in an authentic hadith narrated by Bukhari, "Prophets are brothers, all from different mothers, yet their father is one, and their din is one.." This highlights that although they may have come with different legislations, the core of their religion was one, singling Allāh out in worship. As the verse states:

"And verily we sent to all nations messengers calling the people to the worship of Allāh and to abstain from Tāghūt."

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا
الطَّاغُوتَ ۖ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ
الضَّلَالَةُ ۖ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ
الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

Therefore, for us to say that Yusuf (AS) placed himself in a position where the laws of Allāh were violated, i.e. major shirk taking place, for the sake of bringing about some benefit is a damning accusation. Which prophet ever compromised his call? Which prophet ever settled for partial implementation of tawhīd?

Rather what we have is a messenger who won over the trust from the king for his religion and gave him a free role to rule however he desired. This is a by far a different reality to entering into parliament and being subject to the decision of the majority and then having it established in the name of that parliament, which in effect, is it being passed in your name.

It's not confirmed as to whether the king became Muslim or not, however a narration on the authority of a number of scholars suggest so. As Ibn Jarīr

and Al Baghawai on the authority of Mujāhid, state that the king embraced Islām. There isn't much need to go too deep into the Islamic legal evidences here as it has been discussed in "*The doubts regarding the ruling of democracy in Islām*".

Despite basing such a sensitive issue concerning the rights of Allāh, those who legalise the participation in democratic elections base their argument upon this uncertain misconception. Although, as clarified in the above mentioned article, the scholars state that: *if there is difference in possible meanings then the use of that argument, as evidence, drops*. Due to this misconception, a core concept of the dīn is opposed and although various narrations suggest that the king became Muslim they choose not to err on the side of caution. In light of all of the available verses in the Qurān, authentic traditions of the messenger (s.a.w) and the statements of the scholars regarding other than Allahs judgement, they side with this evidence to push people to the ballots.

If we say, for example, that the king never accepted Islām, can we then say that this evidence presented of Yūsuf accepting a position as minister for the king is acceptable?

Firstly its incumbent upon us to recognise that the Qiyās used here, as that's what it is, is not accepted. This is so, as these people have drawn an analogy with the incidents that led him to being a minister and its reality to the reality of a Muslim becoming a minister in a democratic system, which is very different. They then go further to say that if an individual can enter into the democratic system as Yūsuf (a.s) did, then surely it's permitted for people to vote.

So what is the difference between the two realities? The first factor that we must recognise is that there is not much known about the king other than

what is mentioned in the Qurān and maybe in various Ahadith, as well as the tafsīr (although it mentions him becoming Muslim). Likewise not much is known about the reality of the situation and what the role of Yusuf entailed. Again, although the verses and narrations state that he was given full authority in the land, the rest is merely the thoughts of people, often based upon conjecture. However what is known to us is the reality of the democratic system and if the Qiyās is made then its wrong for the following reasons.

Firstly; the governments today oblige those who desire to be a part of it to swear an oath that they bear allegiance to their system which is the highest authority in the land. As sworn by all MPs in the U.K, the oath of MP's as its known, reads:

*"I [name] swear by the almighty God that I will be faithful and **bear true allegiance** to her majesty Queen Elizabeth, her heirs and successors according to law, so help me God."*

As it can be seen, it is required that a true form of allegiance is made, these oaths often entail that the ministers respect the laws and display true sincerity to that false deity, and this oath varies from country to country.

So the reality of today's governments requires this level of sincerity, which opposes the fundamental beliefs of Islām that '**true**' allegiance is to Allāh and his messenger and the believers, and if one swears true allegiance to anyone else then he has left the fold of Islām. It is also important to bring to the surface that these governments openly announce their opposition and disapproval of the religion of Allāh, to the extent that they seek to destroy any possible seed that is planted and may reap into an Islamic government. We see their open hostility to anyone who desires to implement the laws of Allāh even if they are in a far corner of the globe, thousands of miles away.

Likewise if someone openly expressed their desire to rule by the laws of the all mighty Allāh, will they be permitted to do so like Yūsuf (a.s) did? We have already been informed by Allāh that the king said to him:

"Indeed, you are today established [in position] and trusted."

وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ أَتَنْوِي بِدَعَايَ اسْتَخْلَاصِهِ لِنَفْسِي فَلَمَّا كَلَّمَهُ قَالَ إِنَّكَ الْيَوْمَ
لَدَيْنَا مَكِينٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

And also Allah states:

"And thus We established Joseph in the land to settle therein wherever he willed."

وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَتَّبِعُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ نُصِيبُ
بِرَحْمَتِنَا مَنْ نَشَاءُ وَلَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

And the narration of Ibn Zayd which tabbari mentions in his tafsīr:

"He did in the land as he pleased."

Also on the authority of Wahb, Sudī, Ibn ‘Abbās and others where the king explicitly states:

"And I hand over to you the authority to do as you please and we to you, followers...and I am merely one of your subjects."

So the verses narrate to us the situation and no where do we see Yusuf (a.s) being forced to make an oath of allegiance to any false deity, nor was he subjected to the rule of any man made laws, rather it is apparent that it was

the opposite. If anyone desires to say he was then “Hātū burhānakum...” let him bring his evidence and know, that his accusation maybe tantamount to kufr.

Secondly: The position of authority was given to him as stated:

“And like so we gave the authority to Yusuf.”

So here we can see that Yusuf (as) had the authority and it was given to him, and not the king, as the verse explicitly shows.

Yet again a desperate attempt has been made by taking the story of Yusuf (a.s) and claiming our reality mirrors that, however the true monotheist sees past such a misconception and holds firm to the rope of Allāh.

IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE GREATER GOOD AND ‘LESSER OF THE TWO HARMS’

The use of Maslaha as an argument in support of electoral participation indicates that these people are unable to bring any evidence that is sufficient to support their claim. For example they often use the story of Yusuf (as), Najāshī and also Hilf al Fudūl, so if these arguments support their claims, why then, do they feel the need to present the argument of ‘lesser of the two harms’.

Before delving deeply into the issue of maslaha ‘benefit’, we must establish that there is no Maslaha greater then the core, Usūl of this dīn, which is singling Allāh alone in worship. For this purpose mankind was created, as he the Most High states:

“And verily I did not create man or jinn except to worship me.”

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾

Also:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيَمَةِ ﴿٥٧﴾

“And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion.”

The statement and testimony of shahāda is what every verse in the final revelation came to establish. It’s the reason for the revelation of all books, all messengers and all laws.

It’s often argued by the spineless ones who trust in democracy to bring them out of their hardship that: ‘If you don’t vote then people are going to vote anyway and these crimes against Islam will be committed anyway, so therefore you may as well minimise the evil.’

Then we say to these individuals:

If shirk is taking place in your local community and you witness it, do you then participate in those rituals of shirk arguing ‘Its taking place anyway so I may join in and encourage them not to worship a bigger taghūt or wathan or idol, in order to minimise the harm?

No sane individual will ever be audacious enough to claim this, then why do they have the confidence to say this in regards to voting? Are their principles of Allah's Uluhiyyah still cloudy and infirmly planted?

Sayid Qutb states that:

"The word 'benefit of the da'wah' must be removed from the dictionary of the people of da'wah, as it is an entrance for Shaytān that he comes to them from it..."

He continues to say:

"Maslaha of da'wah has been transformed by the people of da'wah to an idol that is worshipped, and they have forgotten the methodology of the core da'wah."

He also comments:

*"Verily the legislation of Allāh as he revealed it and as the messenger (s.a.w) portrayed it, incorporates the benefit of mankind. Therefore if mankind one day are presented with a maslaha that opposes the legislation of Allāh then they are deluded, as has been presented in the book of Allāh: **"And they do not follow except conjecture and what they themselves desire."***

Secondly: They are disbelievers, (kāfiroun): A person does not claim that benefit is in what he sees from that which opposes what Allāh has legislated, and remains for a moment upon this religion or from its people."

يقول سيد قطب رحمه الله: إن كلمة مصلحة الدعوة يجب أن تُرفع من قاموس أصحاب الدعوات، لأنها مزلة ومدخل للشيطان يأتيهم منه حين يعز عليه أن يأتيهم من ناحية مصلحة الأشخاص، ولقد تتحول مصلحة الدعوة إلى صنم يتعبده أصحاب الدعوة وينسون معه منهج الدعوة الأصيل

إن مصلحة البشر متضمنة في شرع الله، كما أنزله الله، وكما بلغه عنه رسول الله .. فإذا بدا للبشر ذات يوم أن مصلحتهم في مخالفة ما شرع الله لهم، فهم أولاً: واهمون { إن يتبعون إلا الظن وما تهوى الأنفس ولقد جاءهم من ربهم الهدى } فيما بدا لهم النجم:23.

وهم ثانياً: كافرون .. فما يدعي أحد أن المصلحة فيما يراه هو مخالفاً لما شرع الله، ثم يبقى لحظة واحدة على هذا الدين، ومن أهل هذا الدين ا-هـ .

The fatawa in favour of voting often mention that engaging in democracy is to obtain the greater good and help establish the laws that are in line with Islamic interests. The question then arises 'What are Islamic interests and who/how are they defined? Ultimately the Islamic law came to abolish all forms of false deities and bring the people back to the oneness of Allah.

Although Ibn Taymiyyah clearly stated that:

*"The Shariah has been revealed to obtain all possible benefits and to prevent as much harm as possible and reduce it if both cannot be achieved together, and to ward off the worst of the two evils if both evils cannot be prevented."*³⁵

This understanding should not be abused and be used as a dalil to live a life in accordance to ones whims and desires, we must be careful how we approach this, as this concept does not authorise an individual to enter another religion in an attempt to obtain some 'benefit'.

The reality of what they are claiming, when used in the context of voting is that; one participates in another religion, i.e. democracy to ward off the threat of an MP who is unsympathetic to Islam and Muslims. However in reality the

³⁵ Fatawa 23/343

system itself has been installed to suppress the purity of the true religion of Islām.

Here Ibn Taymiyyah refers to the 'Shariah' and the foundation and core of it is the oneness of God and the abstaining and following that which opposes the shariah.

In the reality of today's political arena, mainly in the west, it is inconceivable that the maslaha can be identified and attained due to the complexity and overwhelming variations of violations to the laws of Allāh. On one hand a party can 'promise' to deliver a domestic ruling in favour of the Muslims, under the slogan of freedom for ethnic minorities, whilst at the same time on a global level they seek to destroy the religion of Allāh.

If we look not too far back, many Muslims who had hoped in bettering their stay in the west casted their votes in favour for candidates such as Bush, Obama and Blair, who as soon as they gained power initiated or continued their war on Islām. Many of these democratic participants were driven to the ballots by the fatāwa of scholars who claimed there was a need to choose one who they identified to be 'a lesser evil'.

Allāh (s.w.t) states in the Qurān:

"And never will the Jews or the Christians approve of you until you follow their religion. Say, "Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [only] guidance." If you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, you would have against Allah no protector or helper."

وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ قُلْ إِنْ هَدَىٰ
 اللَّهُ هُوَ الْهَدَىٰ وَلَئِنْ أَتَبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَعْدَ الَّذِي جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَكَ
 مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿١٢٠﴾

These concise verses in the Qurān can not be any clearer. The reality of democracy is that it is the millah of the west, the Jews and the Christian. Furthermore they rule by their desires as the verses categorically states, *“And if you follow their desires”* which is the essence of democracy in the form of ascribing the godhead of the land to the nation, or individuals who represent them. Once this breach and violation of the rights of Allāh takes place, then as he, the Most High states, *“Then you (Mohammed) have no supporter or helper from Allāh”* So in terms of attaining the greater good, how can it be possible when we turn our backs on Allāh, incurring his wrath.

Engaging in democracy, another religion is the cause of the downfall of the Muslims, as Allāh states to his beloved messenger:

“Verily we revealed unto you (Muhammed) and those before you, that if you ascribe partners (unto me), surely your actions will become void and in you and surely you will be of the losers.”

وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكَتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ
 وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

This is his stern warning to all the messengers and to Muhammed s.a.w himself. So how is that we feel confident to participate in democracy when

voting for a legislator is shirk in itself, let alone what occurs after that from their evil legislations and animosity to this religion.

We saw how many hopes were raised by the defeatist scholars who encouraged Muslims to vote for Obama and some even sent letters to congratulate his victory in the elections, only to be deceived and stung by the same trap. Politics more often than not is a dirty game and these enemies of Islām seize to mislead the blind scholars and the ignorant Muslims to empower them into the position of supreme authority in the land. Promises were made of troop withdrawals from Iraq and the Muslims rejoiced, only to be redeployed and reshuffled to other countries such as Afghanistan and at the same time behind close doors they scheme and plan to destroy the final message to mankind.

As Allāh states:

“Verily Najwā (secret council) is from the Shaytān, so that he may cause grief to the believers.”

إِنَّمَا النَّجْوَى مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ لِيَحْزُبَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَيْسَ بِضَارِّهِمْ
شَيْئًا إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

Without doubt, regardless of who is empowered to take full authority in the land, they hold these secret councils to destroy this religion, as this is the ongoing conflict between truth and falsehood.

As the Most High states:

“And thus We have made for every prophet an enemy - devils from mankind and jinn, inspiring to one another decorative speech in delusion. But if your

Lord had willed, they would not have done it, so leave them and that which they invent."

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَاطِينَ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوحِي
بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ
فَذَرَّهُمْ وَمَا يُفْتَرُونَ



Bearing in mind the reality of democracy and how the attainment of 'Maslaha' is a farce, we must revisit our established principles of Tawhīd, and ask 'does the false hope of attaining these masālih justify empowering an individual to legislate besides Allāh?

Also what is extremely surprising is those who call for the participation in the democratic process fail to identify and unify the small population of Muslims to vote for one specific legislator. If the maslaha was so apparent and the danger so imminent, why are they failing to identify which legislator to empower and to ensure that the Muslim votes do not counter act others? The Muslim communities have been left with no guidance, just an open door to participate in what is most certainly another religion.

Also scholars state that for the Muslims to engage in an illegal action to prevent a greater one, then there has to be no other means available and if there is then, the engaging in the sin becomes unlawful. Therefore the guidelines have been documented and this is not the first time where people use this ruling to engage in what there desires call them to.

Sheikh Abu Qatāda again deals with the issue of Maslaha in his interview when he states:

*"And whosoever sees the permissibility of entering (elections) as a maslaha in this topic has come with something great (in magnitude) to the religion of Allāh. The necessity of the religion takes precedence over all necessities and that's unanimous, and nothing takes precedence of the dīn as shātabi (RH) says..."The necessities are of different levels and the necessity of the religion has been given precedence, placed before any other."*³⁶

Many of these fatāwa such as the one issued by Haytham Haddād lists many examples of the 'lesser of the two harms' giving the impression that voting is permitted due to warding off a greater harm. It's important to be aware that none of the examples provided are remotely similar to the reality of committing kufr to obtain some benefit.

For some it may seem far fetched, the principle of supporting one tyrant over the other by empowering him and supporting his manifesto, as the same as supporting one false prophet over the other. If two men claim to be prophets and one was a greater threat to Islām and the Muslims, can we say that empowering one over the other is permitted as his threat is less? If supporting one over the other by means of calling people to assist him in attaining power is not permitted, and its totally inconceivable that anyone would regard it to be otherwise, then in principle, supporting one tyrant over the other in the democratic elections is the same.

The reason for this is that support for one member of parliament and empowering him involves an individual to engage in another religion, giving credibility to their man made ungodly system and elevating his status into a god like one of legislating. In reality this is setting up a rival unto Allāh, so why is it that supporting a false prophet over another is clearly recognised to be out rightly unlawful? The Companions of the messenger s.a.w never aided one false prophet over another, although they deemed some of them a greater

³⁶ Refer to Mawāqafāt fy Usūl As Shari'ah vol 1/38

threat than others. Some posed a more imminent threat than others, and although their situation was dire, the thought never crossed their mind.

With regards to 'the lesser of the two evils' the guidelines of this ruling must be explained and clarified to the people. The lesser of the two harms, exists in circumstances such as an individual being coerced or unable to prevent various harms befalling one self. For example, as the scholars in the past have clarified, that if one is coerced to make a choice between two options, both being harām, then the lesser of the two is chosen.

Another issue pertaining to this topic is the principle that; if one is alleviated from this coercion then immediately he is not excused to engage in or opt for an evil or an unlawful matter. As the principle states '*what is permitted with an excuse becomes false (not permitted) once the situation changes.*'

Mā jāza l'uthrin batala bi zawālihi

It's more than apparent from the latest video issued regarding voting, that they have taken this issue as a joke and have turned what; according to them is a situation where we are forced to choose the lesser of the two evils, in to a comical advert. Do they really expect people to take their fatawā seriously after issuing such a video? Do they really look like they are forced to choose one legislator over the other? They are propagating something so serious, calling the people to engage in another religion where the rights of the Most High are violated, yet they come forth with such rhetoric with no Islamic legal evidence.

Additionally there is another principle that the scholars mention which states:

If it becomes loosely used, then it becomes restricted: *Itha itasa'at dāqat.*

In fact this is what has happened, the gates for the participation in democracy have been opened and people are entering them and when approached they use the fatāwa of these scholars to justify their actions claiming 'It's the lesser of the two evils'.

IN CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can see that as the messenger s.a.w. stated in a narration, reported by Abī 'Āsim, on the authority of Jābir bin 'Abdillāh who said:

"We were sitting with the messenger s.a.w one day when he drew a line on the ground in front of him like so, and said "This is the path of Allāh", he then drew a line to his right and to his left and said "these are the paths of the Shaytān." He then placed his hand upon middle line and recited the verse: "And, [moreover], this is My path, which is straight, so follow it; and do not follow [other] ways, for you will be separated from His way. This has He instructed you that you may become righteous."

وَأَنْ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَاكُم بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

Without doubt, democracy is a path of the shaytān, a path that leads to the destruction of man, allowing him to lead a life of disobedience to his creator.

As true believers in Allāh, we have been granted the final revelation a source of guidance and criteria between that which is right and that which is wrong. The Quran to the true believer is a source of hope in times of hardship and a reference in times of confusion, Allāh the all mighty states:

"Allah has promised those who have believed among you and done righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession [to authority] upon the earth just as He granted it to those before them and that He will surely establish for them [therein] their religion which He has preferred for them and that He will surely substitute for them, after their fear, security, [for] they worship Me, not associating anything with Me. But whoever disbelieves after that - then those are the defiantly disobedient."

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي
الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ
الَّذِي أَرَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا
يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

Allāh explicitly states that he has promised to make the believers successful and establish them in the land and that the religion he has chosen for these people is Islām. He goes on to mention that he will change their situation from one of fear to one of security, which is what the Muslims today are seeking. However this will only come about when they single him out in all worship. Upon obedience to the All-mighty can we then expect this promise to be delivered, and as Allāh reiterates in the Qurān time after time, *"For verily Allāh does not fail to fulfil his promise."*

The biggest reason for the downfall of this ummah is the lack of attention paid to these verses of Allāh, and when shari' evidence is sought, unfortunately, more often than not, the verses of Allāh are not sufficient for many. Despite the manifest reality of democracy, and clarity of this verse,

people have formulated shocking opinions, which have been the cause of the delay of Allāh's promise.

Engaging in democracy is no short term solution, and for those who regard it as a permanent permitted form of rule then they have most certainly disbelieved in Allāh and that which was revealed unto Muhammed s.a.w.

Brothers and sisters in Islam; be aware of the dangers involved in these fatāwa and safeguard your honor, your dīn and your dignity. As the messenger s.a.w stated:

"Shirk is more hidden than a black ant creeping on a black stone in the middle of a moonless night."

Need more be said about such an open form of disobedience to God?

In regards to the fatāwa of those who call to the participation of the electoral process, it has been reported in a narration:

Narrated by Darimy in his sunan on the authority of ziyaad bin hadir who said:

Umar said to me:

"Do you know what will destroy Islam?"

He said

"No"

Who then said "The mistake of the Scholar is that which will destroy it, and the argument of the hypocrite from the book and the rule of the misguided leaders."

(Albani declares it authentic)³⁷

³⁷ Mishkaat al masaabih bi tahqiqihi 89/1

وروى الدارمي في سننه عن زياد بن حدير قال: قال لي عمر هل تعرف ما يهدم الإسلام؟ قال: لا. قال: "يهدمه زلة العالم وجدال المنافق بالكتاب وحكم الأئمة المضلين". قال الألباني إسناده صحيح [مشكاة المصابيح بتحقيقه: 89/1]

Also is the Hadīth of Mas'ūd (ra) on the authority of Yazīd ibn abī ziyād, on the authority of Mujāhid, on the authority of Ibn 'Umar (ra):

"The messenger s.a.w. said: "The three things I fear most for my nation are: The mistakes of the scholars, the argument of the Munāfiqīn by the Qurān and the Dunyā..."

حديث مسعود بن سعد عن يزيد بن أبي زياد عن مجاهد عن ابن عمر قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم «أشد ما أتخوف على أمتي ثلاث: زلة عالم، وجدال منافق بالقرآن، ودنيا تقطع أعناقكم

As Sha'bī states: Umar (ra) said:

"A time will be corrupted by three things; Misguided imāms (religious leaders), the argument of the hypocrites from Qurān and the Quran is the truth, and the mistakes of the scholars."

وقال الشعبي: قال عمر: يفسد الزمان ثلاثة: أئمة مضلون، وجدال المنافق بالقرآن، والقرآن حق، وزلة العالم

As shātabi states: It is not correct to rely upon the mistakes of the scholars nor take what they say as a result of blind following...³⁸

³⁸ Al mawāqifāt li shātibiy 170-172/4

Bukhāri also mentions in '*Kitāb al I'tisām*' in his authenticated book: If one exerts effort and makes ijtihād that is incorrect without knowledge then it is rejected according to the statement of the messenger s.a.w. "Whoever acts not in accordance to our affair (sunnah) then it is rejected."³⁹

Therefore, it is upon us to verify that these Islamic verdicts that are issued are based upon Islamic principles and that they are correctly used. If not, then we should abstain from them and openly condemn them.

Most of these fatāwa are based upon Qiyās despite the concise explicit verses instructing man to keep away from any legislation other than Allāh's, as well as abstaining from that which is worshiped besides Allāh.

We ask Allāh s.w.t that he replaces our hardship and fears with security and ease. And that he establishes his religion throughout the lands. And we also openly declare our disapproval to you, O Allāh, of the actions of those who participate in the elections, we ask Allāh to guide us and them, and that he gives us all the insight to single Him out in His worship and that he pardons all of the Muslims. Ameen

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³⁹ Fath al Bāri 318/13

